

Environment Strategy 2018 - 2030: delivering a better future



Monitoring and managing change

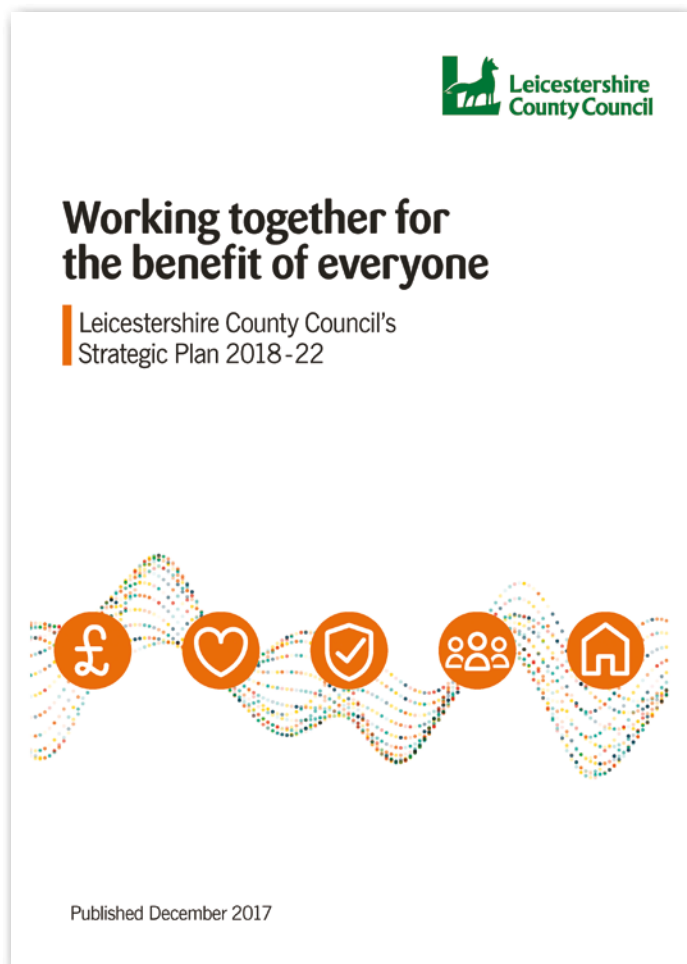
Performance monitoring of the Strategy will continue to be managed through the Council's Environmental Management System, (which has been developed in line with ISO 14001 requirements), together with a number of supporting performance management systems. This will include performance monitoring of the high level targets set out in the Strategy and the additional supporting targets and KPIs which form part of the Action Plan.

Where targets, KPIs or monitoring systems have yet to be established these will be developed through the Action Plan process in consultation with relevant officers and partners. In particular we will develop additional targets and KPIs to support environmental aspects such as resource use, biodiversity, pollution, health and wellbeing and the local economy. This will allow the targets to be measurable and monitored throughout the life of the strategy to demonstrate progress and achievement.

Progress towards the targets using the KPI data will be regularly reported to a range of internal stakeholders. In addition, an environmental performance summary report will be published on the Council's website each year.

How the Environment Strategy contributes to the Council's Strategic Plan

Leicestershire County Council recently launched its Strategic Plan 2018-22 entitled 'Working together for the benefit of everyone'. The Strategic Plan takes an outcome based approach which focusses on the difference the Council wants to make. In doing so it has developed five strategic outcomes essential for achieving the vision of a good quality of life in Leicestershire.



The Environment Strategy will cut across each of the strategic outcomes and will contribute to the achievement of the outcomes. The table below summarises some of the key strategy contributions:

Table 1 Key contributions of the Environment Strategy to the Strategic Plan 2018-22 outcomes.

Strategic Plan Outcome	How Environment Strategy contributes
<p>Strong Economy</p> <p>Leicestershire's economy is growing and resilient so that people and businesses can fulfil their potential.</p>	By contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions and helping to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to have significant negative impacts on the economy.
	By identifying local business opportunities that will arise from the move towards a low carbon future e.g. renewable energy, sustainable transport, smart technologies, research and development.
	By seeking to address concerns around energy security and energy costs by identifying opportunities for local energy generation and distribution.
	By supporting the more sustainable use of resources and greater resource efficiency and enabling reductions in costs for businesses.
	By supporting efforts that recognise the valuable contribution that the natural environment makes to the economy particularly the rural, leisure and tourism economies.
	By supporting work to reduce biodiversity loss and increase biodiversity where possible and therefore supporting the local agriculture and food industries that depend on biodiversity.
	By identifying business opportunities that will arise from the move towards a circular economy.
<p>Wellbeing and Opportunity</p> <p>The people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.</p>	By supporting the creation, protection, enhancement and accessibility of sustainable green infrastructure which provides natural environments for people to enjoy and contribute towards their health and wellbeing.
	By taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and therefore contribute to reducing the risks from climate change on people's health and wellbeing particularly from severe weather events and disease.
	By supporting action to improve air quality and therefore reducing the health impacts associated with poor air quality.
	By taking action which will reduce biodiversity loss and help mitigate the consequences of food shortages and related health effects.

Strategic Plan Outcome	How Environment Strategy contributes
Keeping People Safe People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.	By taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and therefore contribute to reducing the risk of harm to people from climate change for example flooding and heatwaves.
	By supporting action to improve air quality and therefore contributing to reducing the number of deaths associated with poor air quality.
	By taking action to reduce pollution and contamination where possible and to mitigate their impact therefore reducing the risk of harm to people.
Great Communities Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area.	By supporting communities to reduce their environmental impacts.
	By identifying opportunities for communities to support each other in mitigating and adapting to climate change.
	By working with communities to create, protect, enhance and manage local green infrastructure and biodiversity.
	By supporting communities with the move towards low emissions vehicles and technologies.
	By supporting opportunities for communities to be more self-sufficient and sustainable.
	By working with partners to support action that respects, conserves and enhances the character, heritage and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns.
Affordable and Quality Homes Leicestershire has a choice of quality homes that people can afford.	By encouraging the provision of low carbon housing which can be cheaper to build and run.
	By encouraging the construction of more sustainable and lifelong housing.
	By supporting residents to be more resource efficient in terms of energy and water use therefore reducing the cost of running a home.
	By encouraging the provision of housing that enables more sustainable access to local services, green spaces, transport and employment and minimises and/or mitigates the impact of developments on the natural environment.

In order to achieve its overall strategic vision of ‘Working together for the benefit of everyone’ the Council has committed to a set of guiding principles which will shape its approach and define how it works as an organisation to achieve this vision. These principles include a commitment to contribute positively to the environment. This Strategy provides a framework for how this commitment will be achieved.

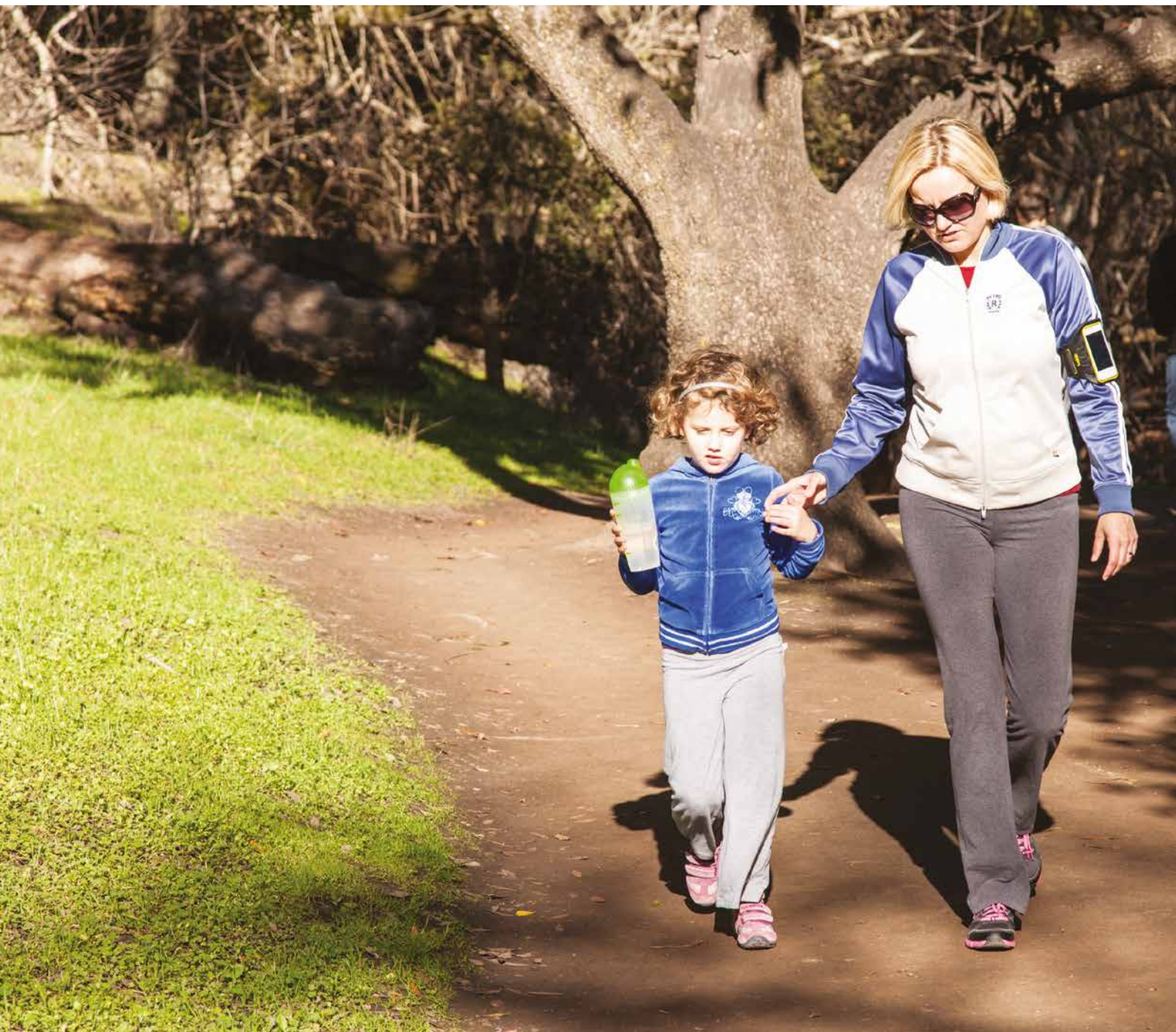
Governance

Ongoing delivery of the Environment Strategy will be overseen by chief officers sitting as the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

The Environment Strategy will be implemented by the Environment Strategy Delivery Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Environment & Waste. Board members will be drawn from relevant Heads of Service, Team Managers or officers involved directly in specific projects/initiatives set out in the Action Plan. The board will engage with external partners to support the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan and will promote partnership working where appropriate. Membership therefore remains flexible to the priorities outlined in the Action Plan which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Environment Strategy Delivery Board will establish project-specific task & finish groups to drive progress which will be reported to the Environment & Transport Lead Member and to CMT, while the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review performance periodically.

With CMT's support, specific activities and programmes of work supporting the aims and objectives of the Environment Strategy will be the responsibility of relevant service area leads. This will reflect specific actions within the different service areas and wider initiatives with strategic partners and others.



Appendix 1 Summary of Council's rationale for taking action on environmental issues

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Climate Change	<p>The release of GHG into the atmosphere, mainly from the use of fossil fuels, results in them acting as a thermal blanket around the Earth. This in turn is causing an increase in average global temperatures and resulting in changes to the climate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of disruption to our critical services from extreme weather events; • Vulnerable people in the community are particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change; • Increased risk of damage to the Council's highway assets; • Support our responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority; • Responsibility to play an active role in helping to meet national and international carbon reduction targets; and • Need to support the local economy in moving to a low carbon future and minimise the financial and reputational costs that would otherwise occur.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Air Pollution	<p>Increasing level of pollutants in the air that we breathe from road traffic, industrial processes and combustion of fuels for heating and electricity generation, resulting in serious public health impacts. Air pollution emanating in Leicestershire also affects people across a much wider area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased costs for Public Health due to rise in illnesses caused by air pollution. • Increased costs for Social Services supporting people living with debilitating diseases caused by air pollution. • Increase in deaths linked to air pollution. • The Council, in its role as the Highway Authority, has a statutory duty to address air pollution from traffic. • The Council contributes to local air pollution through the operation of its buildings and vehicles. • Responsibility to prevent harm.
Waste & Resources	<p>The economy and society consume resources (e.g. energy, water, land, materials) in order to meet the needs of an increasing growing population. This consumption causes a reduction in finite resources and a loss of, and damage to, natural resources. It also results in the production of an increasing amount of waste throughout the whole system. This largely linear economic model has significant environmental impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority responsible for the recycling and disposal of the county's household waste; • The Council is responsible for preparing a Minerals and Waste Local Plan to control the development of waste and minerals sites in the county; • The Council's Trading Standards service is responsible for enforcing some waste regulations eg. Packaging Regulations; • The Council uses a significant amount of resources and produces waste both from its offices and through its operations; • It costs an increasing amount of money to manage the Council's and County's waste; and • Need to support the move to a circular economy that maximises the value of resources and minimises the environmental costs.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Water & Land Pollution and Nuisance (noise, dust, vibrations, odour)	<p>The release of pollutants and contaminants into water and land can pose a major health threat to humans and biodiversity. The use of machinery, equipment and products can also cause a nuisance by creating noise, dust and other impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council carries out activities that carry a risk of spillages and subsequent pollution; • The Council is legally required to ensure the safe use of fuels and chemicals, to prevent pollution events and to have procedures in place for dealing with spillages; • Reputational and financial cost of dealing with a pollution event; and • The Council has a responsibility to avoid or minimise the nuisance caused to local people by its actions.
Biodiversity Loss	<p>There has been a major increase in the scale of biodiversity loss caused mainly by climate change, deforestation and habitat loss, overexploitation, invasive species, pesticides and pollution.</p> <p>This is also leading to a decline in ecosystem functioning and stability - resulting in reduced crop yields, increased soil erosion, loss of dependable water supplies, a decline in pollinators and ever more serious assaults by pests. This in turn leads to increased air pollution, reduced food production and a lowering of human life expectancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a statutory responsibility to take due regard of biodiversity in all of its decisions and activities; • The Council has specific responsibilities to care for its land where it has been designated as important for wildlife; • As a significant landowner in Leicestershire, the Council has an opportunity to make a positive contribution to biodiversity protection and improvement; • Leicestershire is a rural county and the food sector is one of the county's main industries so will be affected by any reductions in crop yields and difficulties in food production; • Leicestershire has a number of significant natural assets such as the National Forest and Charnwood Forest which contribute to the local rural, leisure and tourism economy. These need to be protected and enhanced; and • To protect Leicestershire residents from the consequences of food shortages and the health effects of biodiversity loss.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Landscape & Heritage	The quality of the local landscape and the built environment are major contributors to health, wellbeing and quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a responsibility to provide a quality environment for Leicestershire residents through its role as the Highways Authority, its responsibility to control waste and minerals sites and management of its own land and buildings etc; and • The Council manages several Country Parks that provide important accessible green spaces for leisure and contact with nature.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO ₂ e)	Is a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. It expresses the impact of each different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO ₂ that would create the same amount of warming.
Circular Economy	A more resource efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, the maximum value is extracted whilst in use, then products and materials are recovered, regenerated or recycled at the end of their service life.
Clean Growth Strategy	The UK's strategy for clean growth including opportunities for the UK and next steps to meet the future carbon budgets.
Climate Change Act 2008	The Act ensures that the net UK carbon account for all six Kyoto greenhouse gases for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline. The Act aims to enable the United Kingdom to become a low-carbon economy and gave ministers powers to introduce the measures necessary to achieve a range of greenhouse gas reduction targets.
Climate Change Risk Register Score	All Council services and operations are subject to a Climate Change Risk Assessment based on a number of factors including criticality of the service, direct impacts from severe weather and vulnerable service users. The Climate Change Risk Register score is used to highlight any high risks to be reviewed further.
Climate Local	Climate Local was an LGA initiative launched in 2012 which was supported by the Environment Agency Climate Ready service. The aim was to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change.
Environmental Management System	Refers to the management of an organisations environmental programmes in a comprehensive, systematic, planned and documented manner. In the UK, the Environmental Management Systems standard is based on ISO 14001.

Term	Definition
Euro VI standard	The most recent vehicle emissions standard which sets the level of emissions of carbon dioxide and a range of other pollutants that all new cars must meet.
Greenhouse Gases	Constitute a group of gases which contribute to global warming and climate change. Includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride, perfluorocarbons, and nitrogen trifluoride.
Green Infrastructure	The network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. We also include 'blue infrastructure' (landscape elements linked to water) within our use of this phrase.
International Union for Conservation of Nature	A membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.
ISO 14001	Is the international standard that specifies requirements for an effective environmental management system. It provides a framework that an organisation can follow, rather than establishing environmental performance requirements.
Low Carbon Economy	An economy based on low carbon power sources that therefore has a minimal output of greenhouse gas emissions into the biosphere, reducing the principle cause of man-made climate change.
Natural Capital	The world's stock of natural assets which includes geology, soil, air, water and all living things.
Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change	A declaration signed by over 300 councils in the year 2000 signalling their political commitment to tackling climate change.
Paris Agreement	Is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in 2020. It aims to respond to the global climate change threat by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
Potable Water	Water that is safe to drink or to use for food preparation.
Sustainable Development Goals	In 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. These goals are known as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Acronyms

CMT	Corporate Management Team
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CO ₂ e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CRoW	Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000
EMS	Environmental Management System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
LED	Light Emitting Diode
LWS	Local Wildlife Sites
NERC	Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TBD	To Be Developed

